

VZCZCXRO8501
PP RUEHGI RUEHMA RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #0591 1070724
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 160724Z APR 08 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0579
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0161
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0031
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS KHARTOUM 000591

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, S/CRS, S/E WILLIAMSON
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: UNFPA FIELD OFFICER OPTIMISTIC ON CENSUS

¶1. (SBU) UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Head of Office in Darfur Dr. Ezizgeldi Hellenov told poloff on April 15 that UNFPA will do its best to conduct the census in Darfur. He said that the one-week delay in conducting the census has left his field offices with two problems: first, making sure questionnaires are kept secure; and second, keeping trained enumerators who have deployed to their areas from leaving these areas in the interim or quitting altogether.

¶2. (SBU) When asked about reports that Darfurians and IDPs largely reject the census, Dr. Hellenov responded that he is not an expert in this area; the UNFPA Darfur Office is primarily concerned with reproduction health issues. He expressed frustration that UNFPA is the UN agency responsible for providing the GoS with technical assistance to prepare for and conduct the census, and said that UNFPA in Darfur was only responsible for a small emergency health program before it was tasked with census responsibilities. As for reports that a sizable portion of Darfurians will not participate in the census, he said that UNFPA is a technical agency; from the start he thought it was clear that the Government of Sudan was responsible for issues such as census advocacy and not UNFPA.

¶3. (SBU) Dr. Hellenov said he is confident that the statistical office of UNFPA will adequately assist the census program, but noted that many obstacles remain. For example, 22 percent of Darfur has not been mapped so it is not possible to begin to enumerate those areas. He said that UNFPA has tried to overcome the insufficient mapping by hiring local people who know the terrain, but admitted there are limits to this approach. Despite this, Dr. Hellenov is still optimistic that the census in Darfur will go as well as can be expected under the circumstances. He said that local UNFPA enumerators have their identification cards and census questionnaires and are ready to start.

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: Time and again, UNFPA has pointed out that its mandate is to technically assist the GoS to carry out the census, not to enumerate or fight political battles on issues such as form shortages, IDP returns, Darfur non-participation, and other issues. The UN is doing what it can to help the Central Bureau of Statistics prepare for enumeration in the North by training enumerators, distributing census materials to enumeration areas (through UNAMID), and addressing other technical challenges. Enumerators are equipped to enumerate in Darfur, but that does not change the fact that many IDPs and rebel groups will not participate and in many areas, and that those rejecting the census could turn violent. We expect IDP and rebel group non-participation to lead to an incomplete census in Darfur. Given these results, especially if large parts of the Darfurian population does not participate, the GoS must make a decision about whether to use this year's Darfur census data or to use baseline 1993 census data for Darfur (adjusted to the current year). The data from the census will figure into national wealth

and power-sharing formulas.

FERNANDEZ